

Tom Downey
February 23, 2017
Appropriations – DDS

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee. I am testifying today to urge the committee to reject the cuts that the Governor has proposed to DDS.

My name is Tom Downey and I'm recently retired. I was the DDS Case Manager presently assigned to Malcolm. I hope DDS hears my concern, and sees to it that no other individual with disabilities in our state has the same thing happen to him or her.

I first met Malcolm about 30 years ago while working at Southbury Training School. He was a very independent man who walked freely on the campus of STS. I only knew him to say hello but over the years watched him advocate leaving STS with an advocate from We Care.

Eventually Malcolm did get a community placement and many years of independence. He would walk or ride his bike freely in the community while staff from his private provider would assist him with medical appointments, shopping, bill paying and other daily living chores.

In about 2013 Malcolm's health began to decline and he was placed in a few different group homes with the same private provider. In the fall of 2015 Malcolm became sick and was hospitalized. He was sent to a nursing home and while rehabbing there his private provider notified DDS that they would no longer serve him.

Until very recently, Malcolm remained in the nursing home and complained about how he again is in an institution. Ironically had Malcolm stayed at STS he would still have much more freedom and commitment from DDS than he now has. Before I retired, I was able to find Malcolm a placement in a private sector Intermediate Care Facility (ICF).

According to 2014 Cost reports provided to 1199, there are a total of 69 CLAs on this list- operated by 13 different agencies. Assuming an average of 5 beds per CLA that's a total of 345 beds, but most are occupied. ICF beds are needed in the public sector. Please agree to keep public sector group homes which provide ICF beds open. Please consider using the ICF beds - now empty at Ella Grasso - for people, who like Malcolm, need this level of care.

Thank you